

Australia Brings Back King George V Stamps

On June 17 Australia Post marked the centenary of its first King George V stamps with the release of four domestic base-rate (70c) stamps. These new stamps are modified designs of the original 1914 stamps.

“This issue of George V-based designs marks an important era in Australian stamp production. The stamp issue also brings a new and exciting philatelic product to the range which we trust will spark interest amongst collectors,” said Australia Post Philatelic Manager, Mr Michael Zsolt.

A century ago, Australia’s stamp designs were hot political topics and there was much public discussion about their designs. Postmaster-General Charles Frazer had developed the Kangaroo and Map design as ‘an effective advertisement’ for Australia. However, the absence of the traditional British monarch was believed by conservatives to be an insulting slight to Britain. Consequently, in mid-1913 plans were made to scrap the kangaroo in favor of stamps featuring the monarch, King George V.

The incoming Postmaster-General, Agar Wynne, was quoted in the press as saying the George V design “would make a very good stamp, being emblematic of Australia, and also of our loyalty to the empire”.

For nearly a quarter of a century the George V design served for the



basic letter postage stamp, and for many commonly used postal rates. During this period, a total of 11.8 billion George V stamps were issued.

On January 20, 1936, King George V died and eventually new stamps featuring King George VI were developed.

The designer of the Centenary of King George V Stamps is John White of the Australia Post Design Studio.

In a first for Australia Post, this stamp issue includes a specimen pack in a new format that employs a fold-out design and houses four 10 x 70c sheetlets and one multicolor 10 x 70c sheetlet featuring a “specimen” overprint on four of the stamps.

Also available is a stamp coin – a legal tender coin in the shape of a stamp – with a limited edition of only 2,500.

Other products associated with this stamp issue include a miniature sheet, first day cover, maxicards, prestige booklet, sheetlet pack, stamp pack, booklet of 10 x 70c self-adhesive stamps and a medallion cover.

The new KGV stamps and all Australia new issues and associated products are available at www.auspost.com.au/stamps or contact Australia Stamp Agency in North America toll free (USA and Canada) at 1-800-443-4225 while stocks last.